

year. Instead, they have risen since ObamaCare has been enacted. To go with the increase in cost, many Americans have seen a sharp decrease in their choices. There are fewer plans available, restricting the ability of hardworking families to choose coverage that is appropriate for their circumstances.

Taken together, this trio of liberal policies is adding layers of bureaucratic red tape, forcing Americans to pay more for health care and putting taxpayers on the hook.

In 2009, Democrats used the blank check to add \$1.5 trillion in discretionary spending. When Republicans gained control of the House of Representatives in 2011, we put discretionary spending on a downward trend. Discretionary spending funds our Federal agencies such as the EPA and the IRS, as well as the Department of Defense. We have made real cuts in spending, not slowdowns in growth and not projected cuts down the road—honest-to-God cuts in spending. Since I took office in 2011, discretionary spending has been cut significantly by \$434 billion.

But this does not address mandatory spending, which is the real driver of our national debt. This includes programs like food assistance, welfare, Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and interest on our debt. Reforms are needed to ensure these programs work efficiently and are sustainable. Because of the way ObamaCare was written and enacted, mandatory spending also includes large portions of ObamaCare funding. Mandatory spending is on autopilot and will continue with or without Congress' annual appropriations process.

The fact is we have to change the law. That means both Chambers of Congress have to pass reforms and the President has to sign them or we have to override a veto. Mandatory spending accounts for three-quarters of all money spent by the Federal Government. This is a 180-degree change from when I was a teenager, when in 1970, mandatory spending was only about a third of government spending.

Realistically, there is only one path to a balanced budget and shrinking our national debt. That path is to pass a budget and use a process called reconciliation. A budget facilitates reconciliation, which only requires a 51-vote majority in the United States Senate and avoids a filibuster by liberals who want to continue running up America's credit card. Not doing a budget forfeits the opportunity to do reconciliation. Reconciliation with mandatory spending program reforms, coupled with real tax and regulatory reforms, will send a strong signal to our entrepreneurs and businesses, which will unleash innovation and the American spirit and will, thus, grow our economy and provide for our national defense. A vibrant economy will provide for our national security and priorities without raising taxes.

We have an opportunity with a new President next year to send two reconciliation bills to his desk—one for this fiscal year and another for the next fiscal year. Elections do matter, and this one has historic implications—one being a path to a stronger America and opportunity for every American or a path on a downward spiral of economic disaster, risking our personal and economic freedoms. God help us.

AMERICA IS SADDLED WITH BAD TRADE DEALS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, how does America get saddled with these bad trade deals?

If we look at our free trade agreements, we see a 425 percent increase in our trade deficit with those FTA countries. You get that statistic if you include NAFTA, which, of course, is the granddaddy of all of our free trade deals, and that doesn't even count our worst deal, which was granting most favored nation status to China.

So how do we end up with such bad deals?

First, the elites convince themselves that it is good for the country. They do this because they love the theory of the economic textbook and don't feel comfortable looking at the practice of how business actually works.

Second, the elites benefit from these deals. These deals help economists and Wall Street and attorneys, so they convince themselves that they are good for the country as a whole and create a subcultural echo chamber in which it is a subcultural norm that all smart people realize that these are good trade deals. In having convinced themselves to support these deals, they use a combination of condescension, false appeals to patriotism, and sneaky tactics to saddle the American people with these trade deals.

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Take a look at the effect on working families. America needs a raise. To get it, we need a severe labor shortage. We would have millions of additional jobs, a desperate labor shortage, if only we had balanced trade with the world.

Let's look at TPP and its inclusion of Vietnam. We were told that the Trans-Pacific Partnership will give us free access to the Vietnamese market. There is only one problem: in Vietnam, there is no freedom and there is no market. In fact, we will not have access except as the Communist Party of Vietnam decides to grant it on the basis of crony capitalism, but our workers are going to have to compete against 40-cent-an-hour Vietnamese labor.

Now, we are told that in Vietnam, under this deal, it won't be illegal to organize a union. They won't put you in jail for organizing a union. What

they will do is they will plant drugs on every union activist and arrest them for that. You are not going to see free unions in Vietnam, and that will hurt working families in the U.S.

So how do they sell it? They claim that it may take jobs away, but it is a necessary sacrifice because we have to contain China. As the ranking member of the Asia and the Pacific Subcommittee, I am here to tell you the TPP is great for China.

First, we are told, well, we get to write the rules. No. These are Wall Street's rules. They are not the rules of the American working family.

Second, TPP enshrines the idea that currency manipulation is just fine. So China gets the single most important change in the rules of international trade.

Finally and most obscurely, there are the rules of origin. Now we know that, under this deal, goods that are made in Vietnam or Japan come right in to the United States with no tariffs. What you don't know is the goods that are 50, 60 percent, 70 percent made in China then go to Vietnam or Japan where they can put a made-in-Japan sticker on it and send it to the United States—that is when they admit that it is 50 or 60 percent made in China.

As a CPA, I will tell you, if you are in a position to admit that your goods are 60 percent made in China, that means they can be 90 percent made in China. So China gets to fast-track their goods into the United States, no tariffs, and we get no access to the Chinese markets. So it is a really bad deal.

How do you pass it? You use sneaky tactics. They don't have the votes to pass it now. The American people would rise in opposition to try to pass it now. So they are going to wait for the lame duck and then have a group of retiring Members of this body shaft the American people with the TPP.

We do have a solution. We need to get all three remaining Presidential candidates to declare, if sneaky tactics and lame duck sessions are used to impose TPP on America, that they will, in their first month in office, pull us back out of TPP. Unless we hear that clearly from the three Presidential candidates, all of whom oppose TPP, that they not only oppose it, but they will erase anything that happens in a lame duck session, then the elites will prevail. We will lose jobs again. Our workers will have to compete with 40-cent-an-hour labor. Chinese goods will be fast-tracked into the United States with "Made in Japan" and "Made in Vietnam" stickers on them.

It is time for the Presidential candidates to go beyond saying they are against it. They have to declare that they will make sure that any lame duck approval of TPP that happens in December will be erased the following January.

HEROIN OPIOID CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. ZELDIN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, the growing heroin and opioid crisis has especially hit home in my district in Suffolk County, New York. There was a 2015 report issued in New York State that showed that, out of all 62 counties in New York, it was my home county that was hit the hardest by the rise of heroin and opioid abuse. We had the highest number of heroin-related overdose deaths of any county in New York.

As a member of the Bipartisan Task Force to Combat the Heroin Epidemic, I have spoken with affected families directly. Addiction is a truly devastating disease that shatters lives, families, and communities. It is a disease that only continues to spread at rapid rates, and more can and must be done to counteract the damage it has done and prevent its rapid advancement.

Working closely with my local community, I have been pursuing a more localized solution to address this crisis. Hosting multiple drug task force roundtables in Suffolk County, I have been able to bring together local elected officials, law enforcement, health professionals, community groups, parents, concerned residents, and those in recovery to discuss various ways that we can work together to combat this epidemic. Over the past year, working with both local residents and my colleagues in Congress, I have been pushing to advance legislation in the House that would help provide us with the resources we need to end the growing epidemic crisis on Long Island.

Just last week, joined by my local community, I was proud to announce that there has been progress made to pass several important bills this week aimed at improving and increasing access to treatment, enforcement, and education. The House is now passing many of these critically important measures over the course of the next few days.

While I have been dedicating the most amount of my time advocating for the passage of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, CARA, H.R. 593, many other important proposals are also moving forward.

One other bill that I cosponsor is H.R. 4641, which will be passing today, which would improve the guidelines for prescribing opioids and pain medication by creating a Federal interagency and stakeholder task force that would review, modify, and update best practices for pain management in prescribing pain medication. While there are many legitimate reasons and needs for some to be treated with pain medication, those highly addictive pills pose a serious risk. This critical bill would help ensure that all parties, from prescribers to patients, have access to the most up-to-date information so that lawful prescription use does not become addicting.

Just a few of the other bills include the Examining Opioid Treatment Infra-

structure Act of 2016, H.R. 4982, which would require Congress receive a report on substance abuse treatment availability and infrastructure needs in the U.S., and legislation that would task a Federal agency to create a plan on how to deal with the opioid and heroin epidemic, H.R. 4976.

Legislation is passing to help stop the flow of illegal narcotics into our country, to keep drugs out of our communities and off our streets, such as legislation to help law enforcement officials identify and target drug traffickers, H.R. 3380, and to allow for easier prosecution of these criminals, H.R. 4985.

There is not one piece of legislation that will completely solve this overwhelming crisis, but finally Congress is taking a big step forward in the fight against drug abuse. We must always do everything in our power to provide our local communities with the resources necessary to help stop and prevent drug abuse through treatment, enforcement, and education, which is why I will continue pushing these efforts in the House.

I have spoken to parents of those recovering, parents of those who are unfortunately lost. It is impacting lives. It is devastating families.

Have a conversation in each of our districts, all 435 congressional districts, and we all hear the story all too often. It is not any race, gender, or socioeconomic status. It is not one particular school district. It is impacting all of our children.

As the father of two 9-year-old girls, I visited their class last week. I think of their generation, and it is important that this generation in Congress today does everything in our power this week and beyond to combat this epidemic.

WALLACE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
SELMA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to a hidden jewel in Alabama's Seventh Congressional District: Wallace Community College Selma. Wallace Community College Selma is a stellar 2-year institution that provides incredible educational opportunities to the students of Dallas County and across the Black Belt of Alabama.

Now, more than ever, America needs greater innovation in our educational system to meet the demanding needs of tomorrow. Outstanding higher education institutes in the State of Alabama are producing some of our State's and our Nation's best and brightest who will lead us into the next era of American innovation.

Wallace Community College Selma is leading that charge in my district through its dual enrollment program, which allows high school students to complete college courses and graduate with a high school diploma as well as

an associate degree from this junior college.

In 2008, Wallace Community College Selma graduated 31 students from the Selma Early College High School, which was the first of its kind on a college campus in the State of Alabama. The 2016 graduating class will include 22 dual enrollment students, including 20 students that participated in a special partnership with Tuskegee University.

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute program with Tuskegee allowed Wallace Community College Selma to increase the participation of underrepresented minority students from Alabama's Black Belt counties in the important fields of science and research. This dual enrollment program with Tuskegee offers high school students an opportunity to take classes at Wallace Community College Selma as well as Tuskegee, and to graduate with their high school diploma as well as an associate degree in science.

Mr. Speaker, the dual enrollment program at Wallace Community College Selma is accomplishing what it set out to do: to give Dallas County high school students a head start in college. The benefits of this important opportunity are immeasurable: cutting the cost and the time spent in college while providing high school students significant exposure to the types of classes and fields of interest that will give them an important advantage and jump start on their peers.

Collaborations like these are so critically important to our youth gaining important and invaluable educational experience while obtaining college credit through dual enrollment. America must encourage more of these types of programs as we seek to lead the world in educating our people and attracting new generations of high-tech and high-paying jobs.

As a Member of Congress for the Seventh Congressional District, I take great pride in working to offer solutions that will help lay the foundation for creating better paying jobs and for our educational system to thrive in the future. I am so proud to acknowledge today the tremendous efforts and the outstanding programs offered at Wallace Community College Selma which exemplify the invaluable role our 2-year colleges play in our communities.

This college's leadership and innovation in creating a 21st century learning environment is to be commended—what a jewel to have serving the students of the Black Belt of Alabama. I am proud to represent them in my district and also to help encourage more students to participate in the dual enrollment program and Wallace Community College Selma.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend Dr. James Mitchell for his tremendous leadership as president of Wallace Community College Selma. I want to commend the faculty, administrators, and students of Wallace Community College Selma for being truly outstanding.